

An Antitoxin

It Kept a Girl Young Till Middle Life

By ALAN HINSDALE

Near the end of the last century a gentleman climbed an unfrequented path in the Catskill mountains. Several times he lost his way, but, returning to a starting point that he knew to be on the right path, he began again and finally reached a ledge on which was a building.

What kind of building it was is hard to make clear. It could not be called a dwelling, and it was certainly not a manufactory. It was used for a laboratory. The owner knocked at the door, and his summons was answered by an elderly man in a pair of overalls much spotted, evidently by chemicals. "Dr. Dykeman?" asked the visitor. "I am Dykeman," responded the other.

"I am Mr. John Edgingham. I have heard of you and your discoveries and have come to ask your assistance in a certain matter that concerns me and, more especially, my daughter."

Dr. Dykeman hesitated, looked annoyed as one interrupted in some important work, then led the way to a room where he slept and ate, which was all he did except experiment. There came from other parts of the building a chatter of small animals, such as rabbits, guinea pigs and monkeys. Dr. Dykeman pointed to a well worn chair, and Mr. Edgingham seated himself in it. The doctor took another and waited for his visitor to state his requirements.

"It is reported in scientific circles," said Mr. Edgingham, "that you have discovered the elixir of life."

"That is absurd," said Dykeman. "There is no such thing as the elixir of life. What I have done is to endeavor to state to you in a few words. Set a ball in motion and it will move forever at the same speed if it meets with no resistance or no acceleration. Set a heart to beating and it will beat forever if there is nothing to stop it. A living body would live forever if there were no attacking microbes. Eliminate the microbe and we have perpetual youth. Do I make myself clear?"

"Perfectly. You have discovered an antitoxin for decay."

"There is no such thing as decay. I have discovered an antitoxin for the microbe that undermines animal forces. By killing the microbe I am able to maintain a living body in statu quo."

Mr. Edgingham, after several efforts to rise from a chair, the weakened springs of which had let him down nearly to the floor, succeeded in getting up and, going to the doctor, seized his hand and wrung it.

"Doctor, you're just the man I'm looking for. I wish you to maintain my daughter Rosalind, who is now fifteen years of age, in her present physical condition. Can you do it?"

"There is a great advantage in handling one in youth. After thirty-five, when the building up of the human body ceases, the destroying microbe begins his work. Every year after that the arrest of his undermining becomes more difficult. But why do you wish perpetual youth for your daughter?"

"Because at her present age she is delightful. I cannot bear to think of that peachy cheek, those coral lips, fading. She is full of sprightliness, mischief; she sings, she dances—in short, she is perpetual sunshine."

The doctor looked grave. "I fear, my dear sir," he said, "that you fail to grasp one disadvantage in keeping this daughter of yours always youthful. While I can kill the microbe that undermines her bodily condition and the mental growth which is dependent on bodily condition, I cannot kill experience. While your daughter will remain youthful physically, she will be affected by contact with the world."

"There are disadvantages in everything, doctor," replied the visitor. "I cannot expect to keep my daughter young in all respects. What I ask of you is to keep her physically young. Surely an experienced mind even in a young body cannot be as bad as in a toothless crone."

John Edgingham went home with the antitoxin given him by the man who had got away from his fellow men to study that powerful enemy, the diminutive microbe. Rosa received the preparation with pleasure. Young persons thoroughly understand the undesirable of old age and are apt to consider their elders, even those who devote their lives to them, as continually in their way. Mr. Edgingham explained to his daughter that so long as she took the medicine, as he called it, he gave her she would remain fifteen years old, and that was exactly the age she would prefer to be all her life.

There was no greater favorite among the boys and girls with whom she associated than Rosalind Edgingham at fifteen. They were all about her age, though some of the boys were a couple of years older. Rosa was the life of every party. Half a dozen boys and as many girls formed a social "bunch." There was some pairing off at times. The boy that paired with Rosa was Roger Ashurst, a serious youngster of seventeen, who was her exact opposite. He seldom smiled and was wise as Solomon. Nevertheless, he had an infatuation for Rosa that was more

than puppy love. When the boys and girls were together he continually followed her with his eyes, and if she permitted any other boy to be devoted to her Roger was seized at once with the sulks.

Rosa appeared to reciprocate his attachment. Why, no one could understand, because of the marked difference in them. But we are apt to forget that opposites attract each other. Many a hoyden has married a stiff-necked clergyman who was never known to smile.

Rosa grew older, while Rosa remained a child. When he was eighteen and beginning to think of a career Rosa was still flitting about in madcap style, while her girl friends were beginning to consider themselves young ladies. When Roger was nineteen and removing a growth of hair on his face twice a week Rosa was still absorbed in trifles. Then he went away to be educated in his profession, and Rosa did not see him for several years.

When at twenty-two Roger returned to his native place he found his boyish love the same half child, half woman as when he had paired with her in the days of the "bunch" with which they had both trained. A man of twenty-two is likely to covet the society of a woman older than himself. Roger found his little sweetheart still his little sweetheart, but nothing more. Her prattle seemed altogether too childish for a man of his age. On one occasion upon calling upon her he found her jumping a rope. On another occasion she was playing tag with a boy of her own age. While Roger was disappointed, he could only set down the attraction he had felt for her as one of those first loves which are considered later to have been ridiculous. He gradually came to look upon Rosa as one who had failed to develop and in time withdrew from her.

Twenty years after Rosa had begun to take the antitoxin she still used it. But there were times when she regretted having ever begun it. She was conscious of being a queer mixture. On a body appearing to be but fifteen she put clothing appropriate for a woman of from twenty to thirty. The friend of her youth were married, and the daughters were now about the age that she had been when she ceased to grow older. In some respects she was fitted to associate with misses and in other respects she was not. Her body after her mind, the latter being an emanation from the physical brain, had remained the same as they had been twenty years before. But she had lived thirty-five years, and while physically she did not become wearied with having lived that period, the annals that she expected in such a case had settled upon her. She had neither love, husband, children nor intimate friends. Experience prevented her enjoyment of those things that pleased her when a teen. While she retained her freshness, things had not retained their freshness for her. She now understood that there were not in themselves delightful, but had been made so by their novelty.

She had not seen Roger Ashurst since she was twenty-two. She remembered him as growing into manhood and pined for him as he was then. Not only had he retained his place in her heart, but she was deprived of other men to take his place. Young men attracted to her through her maidenly beauty soon grew tired of her, considering her insipid.

One evening she was introduced to a man of forty or thereabouts. He did not remember ever having seen her before. Her face was familiar to him, but he could not place her. He was a man of intellect, and prominent. He seemed pleased with her prattle. After a man passes middle life he is attracted by women much younger than himself. This is in obedience to the law. Like is antitoxin for like. Physically he found in her a girl just budding into womanhood. Had she talked like a woman of his own age he would have been tired of her; as it was, she was refreshing to him. When he was engaged with the serious work of life he had no use for her; when he threw off care she was like a sparkling wine, a pretty play, soothing music.

They met several times in company without either having heard the other's name. Then she learned that he was Roger Ashurst.

She was at first horrified at the change in her youthful lover, but there was something about him that from the moment she met him in middle age reminded her of him as a boy. She refrained from telling him who she was; she could not bear to let him know that his old love had remained a child while he had developed. But she sought every opportunity to be with him and was pleased that she seemed to rest him.

One day he said to her: "Little girl, when I was a boy I loved a girl about your age. As I grew older I left her behind me—that is, while I developed she did not. When I was twenty-two she seemed frivolous to me. Today you, the same age she was then, refresh me. I wish I could have you with me every day when I come home from the scramble of the world to take the tired out of me."

"I am the girl you loved," replied Rosalind, looking up at him timidly and with the naïvete of a schoolgirl. But she said no more, fearing to throw off her elderly lover by the shallowness of what she would say.

"Do you think you could bear to be tied to one from whom the freshness has all leaked out?"

"I only fear you will tire of one whose youth is her only recommendation."

A few months later Roger Ashurst and Rosa Edgingham were married. On her wedding day she threw away her bottle of antitoxin.

QUARTERMASTER IS NAMED

Dunne Appointed R. W. Thompson of LaSalle for First Field Artillery, Springfield, Ill., July 12.—Governor Dunne has appointed R. W. Thompson of LaSalle quartermaster of the first Illinois field artillery, with the rank of captain.

Mr. Thompson is a graduate of West Point and retired from the United States army with the rank of first lieutenant.

Leave Casement to Fate.
Washington, July 10.—Decision not to report the resolution urging President Wilson to intervene to save the life of Sir Roger Casement was reached by the senate foreign relations committee.

Protests Inheritance Tax Law.
Madison, July 10.—The Wisconsin tax commission is opposed to the passage of a federal inheritance tax law. It declares that the state needs whatever money may be produced by such a tax.

Demand Sleepers.
Boston, July 10.—Governor McCall, in a telegram to Secretary of War Baker, urged that Massachusetts militiamen who go to the border be provided with sleeping cars.

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Notice to Taxpayers.
The summer or city taxes of the city of Owosso will be due and payable at the city clerk's office.

Sixty days from July 1 will be given for collection of these rolls, after which time they are returned.

A. T. WRIGHT, City Treasurer.

Order of Publication.

State of Michigan. The Probate Court for the County of Shiawassee.

At a session of the Probate Court for said County, held at the Probate office, in the City of Corunna, on Thursday, the 6th day of July, in the year of one thousand nine hundred and sixteen.

Present, Matthew Bush, Judge of Probate. In the matter of the estate of Byron W. Gates, deceased.

On reading and filing the petition of A. E. Shannon, praying for license to sell real estate for distribution.

It is ordered, that the 14th day of August, next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, at said Probate office be assigned for hearing said petition.

And it is further ordered, that a copy of this order be published three successive weeks, previous to the said day of hearing, in the Owosso Times, a newspaper printed and circulating in said County of Shiawassee.

MATTHEW BUSH, Judge of Probate.
By CLAIRBELL GALLOWAY, Probate Register. 16-41

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Order of Publication.

State of Michigan. The Probate Court for the County of Shiawassee.

At a session of the Probate Court for said County, held at the Probate office in the City of Corunna on the 16th day of June in the year one thousand nine hundred and sixteen.

Present Matthew Bush, Judge of Probate. In the matter of the estate of William H. Halestead, deceased.

The Administrator of said estate having rendered a final account to this Court.

It is ordered, that the 15th day of July next at ten o'clock in the forenoon at said Probate office, be appointed for examining and allowing said account.

And it is further ordered that a copy of this order be published three successive weeks previous to said day of hearing, in the Owosso Times a newspaper printed and circulating in said County of Shiawassee.

MATTHEW BUSH, Judge of Probate.
By CLAIRBELL GALLOWAY, Probate Register.



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Commissioners' Notice.
In the matter of the estate of Jacob W. Smith, deceased.

We the undersigned, having been appointed by the Hon. Matthew Bush, Judge of Probate in and for the County of Shiawassee, State of Michigan, Commissioners to receive, examine and adjust all claims and demands of all persons against said estate, do hereby give notice that we will meet at the Owosso Savings Bank in the City of Owosso, in said County, on Friday, the 11th day of August, A. D. 1916, and on Wednesday, the 11th day of October, A. D. 1916 at ten o'clock in the forenoon of each of said days, for the purpose of receiving and adjusting all claims against said estate, and that four months from the 11th day of June, A. D. 1916, are allowed to creditors to present their claims to said Commissioners for adjustment and allowance.

Dated the 10th day of June, A. D. 1916.
ASA D. WHIPPLE,
CHARLES W. JENNINGS,
Commissioners.

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